United Nations A/68/802

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 March 2014

Original: English

Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 65
Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Letter dated 18 March 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you information on the State programme entitled "The year of the healthy child" adopted in the Republic of Uzbekistan (see annex).

I would appreciate your circulating the present letter and its annex as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 65.

(*Signed*) Ildar **Shigabutdinov**
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Annex to the letter dated 18 March 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

2014 declared the Year of the Healthy Child in Uzbekistan

At the initiative of President Islam Karimov, 2014 was declared the Year of the Healthy Child in the Republic of Uzbekistan. A State programme entitled "Year of the Healthy Child" was adopted. This was a logical continuation of a socially oriented public policy whose priority since the earliest days of Uzbek independence has been to raise a younger generation that is harmoniously developed, physically healthy and spiritually mature. The objectives reflected in the names of previous years, including the Year of the Mother and Child, the Year of Youth, the Year of the Harmoniously Developed Generation and the Year of the Family, are fully in line with that noble aim, which has enormous importance as a cherished dream of the Uzbek people. What they want above all is to raise healthy and fully developed children with a happy and prosperous future.

An enormous amount of thoughtful work has been done thus far and a number of programmes have been implemented nationwide, primarily the Healthy Mother-Healthy Child programme, which addresses challenges of paramount importance for the development of our country and society. It is crucial that these noble activities — carried out for the sake of our children, our people, and our future — are sustainable and that they continue to expand. They are yielding clear and convincing results.

For example, the radical reform of the health-care system included the development of a national model for mother and child health care whose effectiveness has been recognized worldwide. Through the establishment of specialized medical centres and an extensive network of primary health-care institutions, including rural health posts, and the transition to a family medicine approach, all Uzbeks, and especially women and children living in rural areas, have been given access to skilled medical care. Over the past 10 years, more than $750 million has been invested to modernize prevention and treatment institutions and equip them with the latest technology. In the years since independence, maternal mortality has decreased by a factor of 3.1 and infant mortality has decreased by a factor of 3.2 in Uzbekistan. Thanks to the mother and child screening programme, the number of children born with congenital abnormalities has decreased by a factor of 1.8 since 2000. Today, 92 per cent of Uzbek children meet the World Health Organization's child growth standards. According to the ratings of the Save the Children organization, Uzbekistan ranks among the top 10 countries in the world for children's health care.

The great attention given in our country to the education of a harmoniously developed generation is clearly reflected in the results of the national staff training programme and the State national programme for development of school education. It is well-known that Uzbekistan has introduced a compulsory 12-year education system that meets international quality standards. General education schools have received a total of over 2.8 trillion sums, while children's schools of music and art

have received over 488 billion sums in 2009 for construction and improvement of infrastructure and equipment.

Sport is an integral element in raising a harmoniously developed young generation in Uzbekistan. A unique system has been set up to make sport more appealing to children and adolescents, especially girls, and to promote a healthy way of life. Modern sports centres are being built not only in cities but also in more remote areas. During the period 2003-2013, 1,816 sports facilities were commissioned, which has supported the mass involvement of children in systematic sporting activities and improved their health. Today in Uzbekistan more than 30 sports are regularly practised by about 2 million children, including 842,000 girls.

Great significance is attached to promoting spirituality in society and educating children in national and universal values.

Life, moreover, now poses new challenges in the critical area of raising the young generation. For example, there are still pressing issues to address to expand preventive measures and improve the quality of medical services, especially in rural areas. There is also a need to improve the quality of premarital medical tests and increase the accountability of the experts who conduct them. Another significant challenge is to improve preschool educational institutions and strengthen the institution of the family.

At the same time, the public health-care system bears a high degree of responsibility for establishing children's health. In that connection, greater attention will be paid in 2014 to further improving infrastructure by equipping medical facilities, primarily those engaged in maternal and child health care, with the most advanced equipment and providing them with qualified staff.

Of course, the medical culture of the general population remains an important issue as an important factor in raising healthy children.

The national Year of the Healthy Child programme outlines a package of measures primarily designed to address these pressing issues.

In 2014, all of these efforts will be taken to a higher level as the State programme is implemented. The programme focuses on broad measures to further support the development of a physically healthy, spiritually mature and harmoniously developed generation of young people who can think independently, are intellectually capable, have extensive knowledge and a modern outlook, and can take on responsibility for the fate and future of the country and mobilize all State and social forces and capacities for that purpose.

The programme consists of seven sections and 125 actions that cover all issues relating to the birth, raising and education of children, supporting a healthy atmosphere in the family and its economic and spiritual and moral foundations, and enhancing the effectiveness of the funds allocated to the social sector.

Primarily it defines measures to further improve the legislative and regulatory environment and develop new provisions and principles that create a procedural and institutional context conducive to a healthy and harmoniously developed generation.

The programme provides for the drafting of eight pieces of legislation. They include a draft law on the protection of children from information detrimental to their physical and spiritual development, an amended version of the Physical

Education and Sports Act, a draft law on disease control and prevention, an amendment and supplement to the Act on Education in the Republic of Uzbekistan and an amended version of the Act on Principles of Youth Policy.

In particular, the new legislation on the protection of children from information detrimental to their physical and spiritual development will provide effective legal mechanisms that protect children from the impact of destructive and psychologically traumatizing information and prevent the mass media from promoting cruelty or violence.

The national Year of the Healthy Child programme identifies priorities that include the establishment of a loving family environment with mutual respect and high ethical and moral values, financial support for young families, protection for motherhood and childhood, promotion of maternal and children's health, establishment of the necessary conditions for personal fulfilment and alleviation of women's domestic tasks.

To ensure broader access to quality medical services for women, children and adolescents, week-long clinics are held on a monthly basis to promote health and to provide thorough medical screening for 145,000 people in remote and inaccessible areas. The clinics are staffed by experts from the country's leading clinics.

The construction of new family polyclinics, health resorts and rural health centres continues, while efforts are being made to improve the infrastructure of existing facilities.

The programme provides for improving the infrastructure of 130 cultural and leisure centres, the establishment of 15 new cultural and recreational parks, and the restoration and repair of 29 existing facilities throughout the country.

Great importance is attached to improving women's living conditions and alleviating their domestic tasks by increasing the national production of household appliances and making consumer credit available for their purchase. There are plans to open centres for household and personal services, including beauty salons, sewing and maintenance workshops and other business enterprises, in remote villages in 194 regions of Uzbekistan.

The efforts to provide rural families with comfortable accommodation and improve their living conditions and quality of life will be taken to a qualitatively new level. In 2014, an additional 11,000 single-family houses based on standard designs will be constructed. Two thousand young families will be offered interest-free loans for housing construction and the purchase of domestically manufactured durable goods. A number of new projects will improve water supply and sewage systems in regional capitals and rural communities.

There are plans to implement a package of measures in 2014 to further improve the conditions for the birth of healthy children and promote children's health. These measures include the construction and provision of sophisticated medical equipment for a modern children's multi-specialty centre (level IV), a facility which has no counterpart in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Construction or remodelling is planned for a number of specialized units of the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Paediatrics, the clinic of the Tashkent Paediatric Medical Institute, 13 provincial multi-specialty children's medical centres, 62 district medical associations, and other medical and medical-social facilities. They will all be equipped with modern diagnostic and

therapeutic equipment to provide children with specialized and high-technology health care in a manner consistent with international standards.

The prevention of contagious diseases is of course one of the most effective means of ensuring public health and epidemiological well-being. The child immunization programme will be improved through the phased introduction of new vaccines for various infections. The scale of preventive vaccination coverage will be expanded, on the basis of the national vaccination calendar, to include at least 97 per cent of the cohort.

In the course of 2014, in-depth health screening and iodine treatment is planned for about 6.6 million children in preschools and schools. In rural areas, 400,000 pregnant women will be provided with special multivitamin tablets free of charge, to support their reproductive health.

The national Year of the Healthy Child programme includes specific components for the gradual strengthening of infrastructure at preschool facilities, including major maintenance and provision of equipment, as well as the construction of new facilities. There are plans to prepare and implement innovative programmes to prepare children for school and support their full intellectual, moral, aesthetic and physical development.

The programme to establish the *Barkamol Avlod* children's centres provides for major repairs and equipment for 66 such centres. This will enable more children to engage in creative activities, including creative technical activities.

Measures to improve the quality of elementary school teaching include the revision of programmes and textbooks for grades 1 to 4 and preparation of the relevant teachers' manuals.

In the academic year 2014/2015, 25 million copies of textbooks and teaching aids (575 titles) will be provided for 2.6 million schoolchildren.

The national general educational electronic library project will support children's intellectual development. It includes the establishment of a centre where various learning and teaching materials can be converted into electronic formats, a centre for multimedia information resources, and an integrated information and library network which by 2020 will include all information and library facilities in Uzbekistan.

There is special concern in Uzbekistan for children deprived of parental care and children with disabilities. Measures will be taken over the period 2015-2017 to gradually strengthen the infrastructure of the *Mehribonlik* (children's homes), specialized boarding schools and preschools, and to radically improve the educational process, taking into account the best practices in developed countries.

A number of outstanding intellectual, creative and sports activities are planned for 2014. They include — *Barkamol Avlod* sporting events in the Namangan province, national children's art festivals, the "melodies of our homeland" international competition for folk instruments and the "youngest inventor" competition.

The key tasks set out in the State programme include renovation and major repairs for 380 general education schools with 60,100 students, equipping them with computer and laboratory equipment and other infrastructure. There are also plans for construction, renovation and major repairs of 161 vocational and academic institutions, 48 children's music and art schools and 110 children's sports facilities.

Uzbekistan attaches great importance to the teaching of foreign languages to children. School language laboratories are provided with learning tools enhanced by modern information and communications technology for this purpose.

Efforts to support primary school pupils are continuing. For example, 586,900 first-grade pupils will be provided with training supplies and 6.5 million textbooks, while more than 500,000 second-grade students at general education schools will receive free foreign-language textbooks with multimedia applications.

Children's holiday camps will provide 35,700 free and 280,000 reduced-price places for boys and girls to enjoy their leisure and recreational activities during the summer vacation.

There are plans for restoration work at zoos in Tashkent and Termez and the botanical gardens in Tashkent, Samarkand and Fergana, the opening of subdivisions of the Tashkent Zoo, construction of a water park in the city of Zarafshan, and also major repairs to the national puppet theatre and the "Tomosha" children's musical theatre.

There are many planned activities that reflect the inherent qualities of the people of Uzbekistan, such as their compassion and their desire to help those in need. The State budget will fund the provision of 516,900 sets of winter clothing and 3.1 million copies of textbooks and teaching aids free of charge to children from low-income families. Free trips to Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva and Tashkent will be organized for students from *Mehribonlik* homes and children from low-income families so that they can familiarize themselves with Uzbekistan's rich historical and cultural heritage. Trips to museums, zoos and botanical gardens will also be organized.

In November 2014, an international forum will be held in Tashkent. The subject is social partnership to benefit children: best domestic and foreign practice.

Uzbekistan's urgent challenges can of course only be effectively met through joint efforts and concerted action from families, schools, health systems, government and social organizations, non-governmental organizations, citizens' self-governing bodies and other civil society institutions.

The State programme gives particular attention to strengthening the role of the *mahalla* (local community) institution and expanding its rights and capacities for raising healthy children and providing timely and targeted financial and moral support for families, especially young families.

The list of benefits outlined in the national Year of the Healthy Child programme extends even further.

As noted by President Islam Karimov, the attention and general concern shown for our children, the young generation, reflects above all Uzbekistan's belief in tomorrow and is a sign of its overwhelming and fundamental respect for the people.

This is further confirmed by the national Year of the Healthy Child programme, which has been allocated 4,509.2 billion sums for its activities, the equivalent of $302.9 million. Its implementation will be another important step by Uzbekistan along the path of far-reaching reform with the main purpose of protecting human rights and well-being.

United Nations A/68/803–S/2014/202

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
20 March 2014

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 68
Right of peoples to self-determination

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Letter dated 19 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach hereto the text of the address by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, which he delivered at the Kremlin, Moscow, on 18 March 2014 before State Duma deputies, Federation Council members, heads of Russian regions and civil society representatives (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 68, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**

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Annex to the letter dated 19 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and Russian]

Address by President of the Russian Federation

18 March 2014

Federation Council members, State Duma deputies, good afternoon. Representatives of the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol are here among us, citizens of Russia, residents of Crimea and Sevastopol!

Dear friends, we have gathered here today in connection with an issue that is of vital, historic significance to all of us. A referendum was held in Crimea on March 16 in full compliance with democratic procedures and international norms.

More than 82 percent of the electorate took part in the vote. Over 96 percent of them spoke out in favour of reuniting with Russia. These numbers speak for themselves.

To understand the reason behind such a choice it is enough to know the history of Crimea and what Russia and Crimea have always meant for each other.

Everything in Crimea speaks of our shared history and pride. This is the location of ancient Khersones, where Prince Vladimir was baptised. His spiritual feat of adopting Orthodoxy predetermined the overall basis of the culture, civilisation and human values that unite the peoples of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. The graves of Russian soldiers whose bravery brought Crimea into the Russian empire are also in Crimea. This is also Sevastopol — a legendary city with an outstanding history, a fortress that serves as the birthplace of Russia's Black Sea Fleet. Crimea is Balaklava and Kerch, Malakhov Kurgan and Sapun Ridge. Each one of these places is dear to our hearts, symbolising Russian military glory and outstanding valour.

Crimea is a unique blend of different peoples' cultures and traditions. This makes it similar to Russia as a whole, where not a single ethnic group has been lost over the centuries. Russians and Ukrainians, Crimean Tatars and people of other ethnic groups have lived side by side in Crimea, retaining their own identity, traditions, languages and faith.

Incidentally, the total population of the Crimean Peninsula today is 2.2 million people, of whom almost 1.5 million are Russians, 350,000 are Ukrainians who predominantly consider Russian their native language, and about 290,000-300,000 are Crimean Tatars, who, as the referendum has shown, also lean towards Russia.

True, there was a time when Crimean Tatars were treated unfairly, just as a number of other peoples in the USSR. There is only one thing I can say here: millions of people of various ethnicities suffered during those repressions, and primarily Russians.

Crimean Tatars returned to their homeland. I believe we should make all the necessary political and legislative decisions to finalise the rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars, restore them in their rights and clear their good name.

We have great respect for people of all the ethnic groups living in Crimea. This is their common home, their motherland, and it would be right — I know the local population supports this — for Crimea to have three equal national languages: Russian, Ukrainian and Tatar.

Colleagues,

In people's hearts and minds, Crimea has always been an inseparable part of Russia. This firm conviction is based on truth and justice and was passed from generation to generation, over time, under any circumstances, despite all the dramatic changes our country went through during the entire 20th century.

After the revolution, the Bolsheviks, for a number of reasons — may God judge them — added large sections of the historical South of Russia to the Republic of Ukraine. This was done with no consideration for the ethnic make-up of the population, and today these areas form the southeast of Ukraine. Then, in 1954, a decision was made to transfer Crimean Region to Ukraine, along with Sevastopol, despite the fact that it was a federal city. This was the personal initiative of the Communist Party head Nikita Khrushchev. What stood behind this decision of his — a desire to win the support of the Ukrainian political establishment or to atone for the mass repressions of the 1930's in Ukraine — is for historians to figure out.

What matters now is that this decision was made in clear violation of the constitutional norms that were in place even then. The decision was made behind the scenes. Naturally, in a totalitarian state nobody bothered to ask the citizens of Crimea and Sevastopol. They were faced with the fact. People, of course, wondered why all of a sudden Crimea became part of Ukraine. But on the whole — and we must state this clearly, we all know it — this decision was treated as a formality of sorts because the territory was transferred within the boundaries of a single state. Back then, it was impossible to imagine that Ukraine and Russia may split up and become two separate states. However, this has happened.

Unfortunately, what seemed impossible became a reality. The USSR fell apart. Things developed so swiftly that few people realised how truly dramatic those events and their consequences would be. Many people both in Russia and in Ukraine, as well as in other republics hoped that the Commonwealth of Independent States that was created at the time would become the new common form of statehood. They were told that there would be a single currency, a single economic space, joint armed forces; however, all this remained empty promises, while the big country was gone. It was only when Crimea ended up as part of a different country that Russia realised that it was not simply robbed, it was plundered.

At the same time, we have to admit that by launching the sovereignty parade Russia itself aided in the collapse of the Soviet Union. And as this collapse was legalised, everyone forgot about Crimea and Sevastopol — the main base of the Black Sea Fleet. Millions of people went to bed in one country and awoke in different ones, overnight becoming ethnic minorities in former Union republics, while the Russian nation became one of the biggest, if not the biggest ethnic group in the world to be divided by borders.

Now, many years later, I heard residents of Crimea say that back in 1991 they were handed over like a sack of potatoes. This is hard to disagree with. And what about the Russian state? What about Russia? It humbly accepted the situation. This country was going through such hard times then that realistically it was incapable of

protecting its interests. However, the people could not reconcile themselves to this outrageous historical injustice. All these years, citizens and many public figures came back to this issue, saying that Crimea is historically Russian land and Sevastopol is a Russian city. Yes, we all knew this in our hearts and minds, but we had to proceed from the existing reality and build our good-neighbourly relations with independent Ukraine on a new basis. Meanwhile, our relations with Ukraine, with the fraternal Ukrainian people have always been and will remain of foremost importance for us.

Today we can speak about it openly, and I would like to share with you some details of the negotiations that took place in the early 2000s. The then President of Ukraine Mr Kuchma asked me to expedite the process of delimiting the Russian-Ukrainian border. At that time, the process was practically at a standstill. Russia seemed to have recognised Crimea as part of Ukraine, but there were no negotiations on delimiting the borders. Despite the complexity of the situation, I immediately issued instructions to Russian government agencies to speed up their work to document the borders, so that everyone had a clear understanding that by agreeing to delimit the border we admitted de facto and de jure that Crimea was Ukrainian territory, thereby closing the issue.

We accommodated Ukraine not only regarding Crimea, but also on such a complicated matter as the maritime boundary in the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait. What we proceeded from back then was that good relations with Ukraine matter most for us and they should not fall hostage to deadlock territorial disputes. However, we expected Ukraine to remain our good neighbour, we hoped that Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Ukraine, especially its southeast and Crimea, would live in a friendly, democratic and civilised state that would protect their rights in line with the norms of international law.

However, this is not how the situation developed. Time and time again attempts were made to deprive Russians of their historical memory, even of their language and to subject them to forced assimilation. Moreover, Russians, just as other citizens of Ukraine are suffering from the constant political and state crisis that has been rocking the country for over 20 years.

I understand why Ukrainian people wanted change. They have had enough of the authorities in power during the years of Ukraine's independence. Presidents, prime ministers and parliamentarians changed, but their attitude to the country and its people remained the same. They milked the country, fought among themselves for power, assets and cash flows and did not care much about the ordinary people. They did not wonder why it was that millions of Ukrainian citizens saw no prospects at home and went to other countries to work as day labourers. I would like to stress this: it was not some Silicon Valley they fled to, but to become day labourers. Last year alone almost 3 million people found such jobs in Russia. According to some sources, in 2013 their earnings in Russia totalled over $20 billion, which is about 12% of Ukraine's GDP.

I would like to reiterate that I understand those who came out on Maidan with peaceful slogans against corruption, inefficient state management and poverty. The right to peaceful protest, democratic procedures and elections exist for the sole purpose of replacing the authorities that do not satisfy the people. However, those who stood behind the latest events in Ukraine had a different agenda: they were preparing yet another government takeover; they wanted to seize power and would

stop short of nothing. They resorted to terror, murder and riots. Nationalists, neo-Nazis, Russophobes and anti-Semites executed this coup. They continue to set the tone in Ukraine to this day.

The new so-called authorities began by introducing a draft law to revise the language policy, which was a direct infringement on the rights of ethnic minorities. However, they were immediately 'disciplined' by the foreign sponsors of these so-called politicians. One has to admit that the mentors of these current authorities are smart and know well what such attempts to build a purely Ukrainian state may lead to. The draft law was set aside, but clearly reserved for the future. Hardly any mention is made of this attempt now, probably on the presumption that people have a short memory. Nevertheless, we can all clearly see the intentions of these ideological heirs of Bandera, Hitler's accomplice during World War II.

It is also obvious that there is no legitimate executive authority in Ukraine now, nobody to talk to. Many government agencies have been taken over by the impostors, but they do not have any control in the country, while they themselves — and I would like to stress this — are often controlled by radicals. In some cases, you need a special permit from the militants on Maidan to meet with certain ministers of the current government. This is not a joke — this is reality.

Those who opposed the coup were immediately threatened with repression. Naturally, the first in line here was Crimea, the Russian-speaking Crimea. In view of this, the residents of Crimea and Sevastopol turned to Russia for help in defending their rights and lives, in preventing the events that were unfolding and are still underway in Kiev, Donetsk, Kharkov and other Ukrainian cities.

Naturally, we could not leave this plea unheeded; we could not abandon Crimea and its residents in distress. This would have been betrayal on our part.

First, we had to help create conditions so that the residents of Crimea for the first time in history were able to peacefully express their free will regarding their own future. However, what do we hear from our colleagues in Western Europe and North America? They say we are violating norms of international law. Firstly, it's a good thing that they at least remember that there exists such a thing as international law — better late than never.

Secondly, and most importantly — what exactly are we violating? True, the President of the Russian Federation received permission from the Upper House of Parliament to use the Armed Forces in Ukraine. However, strictly speaking, nobody has acted on this permission yet. Russia's Armed Forces never entered Crimea; they were there already in line with an international agreement. True, we did enhance our forces there; however — this is something I would like everyone to hear and know — we did not exceed the personnel limit of our Armed Forces in Crimea, which is set at 25,000, because there was no need to do so.

Next. As it declared independence and decided to hold a referendum, the Supreme Council of Crimea referred to the United Nations Charter, which speaks of the right of nations to self-determination. Incidentally, I would like to remind you that when Ukraine seceded from the USSR it did exactly the same thing, almost word for word. Ukraine used this right, yet the residents of Crimea are denied it. Why is that?

Moreover, the Crimean authorities referred to the well-known Kosovo precedent — a precedent our western colleagues created with their own hands in a very similar situation, when they agreed that the unilateral separation of Kosovo from Serbia, exactly what Crimea is doing now, was legitimate and did not require any permission from the country's central authorities. Pursuant to Article 2, Chapter I of the United Nations Charter, the UN International Court agreed with this approach and made the following comment in its ruling of July 22, 2010, and I quote: "No general prohibition may be inferred from the practice of the Security Council with regard to declarations of independence," and "General international law contains no prohibition on declarations of independence." Crystal clear, as they say.

I do not like to resort to quotes, but in this case, I cannot help it. Here is a quote from another official document: the Written Statement of the United States America of April 17, 2009, submitted to the same UN International Court in connection with the hearings on Kosovo. Again, I quote: "Declarations of independence may, and often do, violate domestic legislation. However, this does not make them violations of international law." End of quote. They wrote this, disseminated it all over the world, had everyone agree and now they are outraged. Over what? The actions of Crimean people completely fit in with these instructions, as it were. For some reason, things that Kosovo Albanians (and we have full respect for them) were permitted to do, Russians, Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars in Crimea are not allowed. Again, one wonders why.

We keep hearing from the United States and Western Europe that Kosovo is some special case. What makes it so special in the eyes of our colleagues? It turns out that it is the fact that the conflict in Kosovo resulted in so many human casualties. Is this a legal argument? The ruling of the International Court says nothing about this. This is not even double standards; this is amazing, primitive, blunt cynicism. One should not try so crudely to make everything suit their interests, calling the same thing white today and black tomorrow. According to this logic, we have to make sure every conflict leads to human losses.

I will state clearly — if the Crimean local self-defence units had not taken the situation under control, there could have been casualties as well. Fortunately this did not happen. There was not a single armed confrontation in Crimea and no casualties. Why do you think this was so? The answer is simple: because it is very difficult, practically impossible to fight against the will of the people. Here I would like to thank the Ukrainian military — and this is 22,000 fully armed servicemen. I would like to thank those Ukrainian service members who refrained from bloodshed and did not smear their uniforms in blood.

Other thoughts come to mind in this connection. They keep talking of some Russian intervention in Crimea, some sort of aggression. This is strange to hear. I cannot recall a single case in history of an intervention without a single shot being fired and with no human casualties.

Colleagues,

Like a mirror, the situation in Ukraine reflects what is going on and what has been happening in the world over the past several decades. After the dissolution of bipolarity on the planet, we no longer have stability. Key international institutions are not getting any stronger; on the contrary, in many cases, they are sadly degrading. Our western partners, led by the United States of America, prefer not to

be guided by international law in their practical policies, but by the rule of the gun. They have come to believe in their exclusivity and exceptionalism, that they can decide the destinies of the world, that only they can ever be right. They act as they please: here and there, they use force against sovereign states, building coalitions based on the principle "If you are not with us, you are against us." To make this aggression look legitimate, they force the necessary resolutions from international organisations, and if for some reason this does not work, they simply ignore the UN Security Council and the UN overall.

This happened in Yugoslavia; we remember 1999 very well. It was hard to believe, even seeing it with my own eyes, that at the end of the 20th century, one of Europe's capitals, Belgrade, was under missile attack for several weeks, and then came the real intervention. Was there a UN Security Council resolution on this matter, allowing for these actions? Nothing of the sort. And then, they hit Afghanistan, Iraq, and frankly violated the UN Security Council resolution on Libya, when instead of imposing the so-called no-fly zone over it they started bombing it too.

There was a whole series of controlled "colour" revolutions. Clearly, the people in those nations, where these events took place, were sick of tyranny and poverty, of their lack of prospects; but these feelings were taken advantage of cynically. Standards were imposed on these nations that did not in any way correspond to their way of life, traditions, or these peoples' cultures. As a result, instead of democracy and freedom, there was chaos, outbreaks in violence and a series of upheavals. The Arab Spring turned into the Arab Winter.

A similar situation unfolded in Ukraine. In 2004, to push the necessary candidate through at the presidential elections, they thought up some sort of third round that was not stipulated by the law. It was absurd and a mockery of the constitution. And now, they have thrown in an organised and well-equipped army of militants.

We understand what is happening; we understand that these actions were aimed against Ukraine and Russia and against Eurasian integration. And all this while Russia strived to engage in dialogue with our colleagues in the West. We are constantly proposing cooperation on all key issues; we want to strengthen our level of trust and for our relations to be equal, open and fair. But we saw no reciprocal steps.

On the contrary, they have lied to us many times, made decisions behind our backs, placed us before an accomplished fact. This happened with NATO's expansion to the East, as well as the deployment of military infrastructure at our borders. They kept telling us the same thing: "Well, this does not concern you." That's easy to say.

It happened with the deployment of a missile defence system. In spite of all our apprehensions, the project is working and moving forward. It happened with the endless foot-dragging in the talks on visa issues, promises of fair competition and free access to global markets.

Today, we are being threatened with sanctions, but we already experience many limitations, ones that are quite significant for us, our economy and our nation. For example, still during the times of the Cold War, the US and subsequently other nations restricted a large list of technologies and equipment from being sold to the

USSR, creating the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls list. Today, they have formally been eliminated, but only formally; and in reality, many limitations are still in effect.

In short, we have every reason to assume that the infamous policy of containment, led in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, continues today. They are constantly trying to sweep us into a corner because we have an independent position, because we maintain it and because we call things like they are and do not engage in hypocrisy. But there is a limit to everything. And with Ukraine, our western partners have crossed the line, playing the bear and acting irresponsibly and unprofessionally.

After all, they were fully aware that there are millions of Russians living in Ukraine and in Crimea. They must have really lacked political instinct and common sense not to foresee all the consequences of their actions. Russia found itself in a position it could not retreat from. If you compress the spring all the way to its limit, it will snap back hard. You must always remember this.

Today, it is imperative to end this hysteria, to refute the rhetoric of the cold war and to accept the obvious fact: Russia is an independent, active participant in international affairs; like other countries, it has its own national interests that need to be taken into account and respected.

At the same time, we are grateful to all those who understood our actions in Crimea; we are grateful to the people of China, whose leaders have always considered the situation in Ukraine and Crimea taking into account the full historical and political context, and greatly appreciate India's reserve and objectivity.

Today, I would like to address the people of the United States of America, the people who, since the foundation of their nation and adoption of the Declaration of Independence, have been proud to hold freedom above all else. Isn't the desire of Crimea's residents to freely choose their fate such a value? Please understand us.

I believe that the Europeans, first and foremost, the Germans, will also understand me. Let me remind you that in the course of political consultations on the unification of East and West Germany, at the expert, though very high level, some nations that were then and are now Germany's allies did not support the idea of unification. Our nation, however, unequivocally supported the sincere, unstoppable desire of the Germans for national unity. I am confident that you have not forgotten this, and I expect that the citizens of Germany will also support the aspiration of the Russians, of historical Russia, to restore unity.

I also want to address the people of Ukraine. I sincerely want you to understand us: we do not want to harm you in any way, or to hurt your national feelings. We have always respected the territorial integrity of the Ukrainian state, incidentally, unlike those who sacrificed Ukraine's unity for their political ambitions. They flaunt slogans about Ukraine's greatness, but they are the ones who did everything to divide the nation. Today's civil standoff is entirely on their conscience. I want you to hear me, my dear friends. Do not believe those who want you to fear Russia, shouting that other regions will follow Crimea. We do not want to divide Ukraine; we do not need that. As for Crimea, it was and remains a Russian, Ukrainian, and Crimean-Tatar land.

I repeat, just as it has been for centuries, it will be a home to all the peoples living there. What it will never be and do is follow in Bandera's footsteps!

Crimea is our common historical legacy and a very important factor in regional stability. And this strategic territory should be part of a strong and stable sovereignty, which today can only be Russian. Otherwise, dear friends (I am addressing both Ukraine and Russia), you and we — the Russians and the Ukrainians — could lose Crimea completely, and that could happen in the near historical perspective. Please think about it.

Let me note too that we have already heard declarations from Kiev about Ukraine soon joining NATO. What would this have meant for Crimea and Sevastopol in the future? It would have meant that NATO's navy would be right there in this city of Russia's military glory, and this would create not an illusory but a perfectly real threat to the whole of southern Russia. These are things that could have become reality were it not for the choice the Crimean people made, and I want to say thank you to them for this.

But let me say too that we are not opposed to cooperation with NATO, for this is certainly not the case. For all the internal processes within the organisation, NATO remains a military alliance, and we are against having a military alliance making itself at home right in our backyard or in our historic territory. I simply cannot imagine that we would travel to Sevastopol to visit NATO sailors. Of course, most of them are wonderful guys, but it would be better to have them come and visit us, be our guests, rather than the other way round.

Let me say quite frankly that it pains our hearts to see what is happening in Ukraine at the moment, see the people's suffering and their uncertainty about how to get through today and what awaits them tomorrow. Our concerns are understandable because we are not simply close neighbours but, as I have said many times already, we are one people. Kiev is the mother of Russian cities. Ancient Rus is our common source and we cannot live without each other.

Let me say one other thing too. Millions of Russians and Russian-speaking people live in Ukraine and will continue to do so. Russia will always defend their interests using political, diplomatic and legal means. But it should be above all in Ukraine's own interest to ensure that these people's rights and interests are fully protected. This is the guarantee of Ukraine's state stability and territorial integrity.

We want to be friends with Ukraine and we want Ukraine to be a strong, sovereign and self-sufficient country. Ukraine is one of our biggest partners after all. We have many joint projects and I believe in their success no matter what the current difficulties. Most importantly, we want peace and harmony to reign in Ukraine, and we are ready to work together with other countries to do everything possible to facilitate and support this. But as I said, only Ukraine's own people can put their own house in order.

Residents of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, the whole of Russia admired your courage, dignity and bravery. It was you who decided Crimea's future. We were closer than ever over these days, supporting each other. These were sincere feelings of solidarity. It is at historic turning points such as these that a nation demonstrates its maturity and strength of spirit. The Russian people showed this maturity and strength through their united support for their compatriots.

Russia's foreign policy position on this matter drew its firmness from the will of millions of our people, our national unity and the support of our country's main political and public forces. I want to thank everyone for this patriotic spirit, everyone without exception. Now, we need to continue and maintain this kind of consolidation so as to resolve the tasks our country faces on its road ahead.

Obviously, we will encounter external opposition, but this is a decision that we need to make for ourselves. Are we ready to consistently defend our national interests, or will we forever give in, retreat to who knows where? Some Western politicians are already threatening us with not just sanctions but also the prospect of increasingly serious problems on the domestic front. I would like to know what it is they have in mind exactly: action by a fifth column, this disparate bunch of 'national traitors', or are they hoping to put us in a worsening social and economic situation so as to provoke public discontent? We consider such statements irresponsible and clearly aggressive in tone, and we will respond to them accordingly. At the same time, we will never seek confrontation with our partners, whether in the East or the West, but on the contrary, will do everything we can to build civilised and good-neighbourly relations as one is supposed to in the modern world.

Colleagues,

I understand the people of Crimea, who put the question in the clearest possible terms in the referendum: should Crimea be with Ukraine or with Russia? We can be sure in saying that the authorities in Crimea and Sevastopol, the legislative authorities, when they formulated the question, set aside group and political interests and made the people's fundamental interests alone the cornerstone of their work. The particular historic, population, political and economic circumstances of Crimea would have made any other proposed option — however tempting it could be at the first glance — only temporary and fragile and would have inevitably led to further worsening of the situation there, which would have had disastrous effects on people's lives. The people of Crimea thus decided to put the question in firm and uncompromising form, with no grey areas. The referendum was fair and transparent, and the people of Crimea clearly and convincingly expressed their will and stated that they want to be with Russia.

Russia will also have to make a difficult decision now, taking into account the various domestic and external considerations. What do people here in Russia think? Here, like in any democratic country, people have different points of view, but I want to make the point that the absolute majority of our people clearly do support what is happening.

The most recent public opinion surveys conducted here in Russia show that 95 percent of people think that Russia should protect the interests of Russians and members of other ethnic groups living in Crimea — 95 percent of our citizens. More than 83 percent think that Russia should do this even if it will complicate our relations with some other countries. A total of 86 percent of our people see Crimea as still being Russian territory and part of our country's lands. And one particularly important figure, which corresponds exactly with the result in Crimea's referendum: almost 92 percent of our people support Crimea's reunification with Russia.

Thus we see that the overwhelming majority of people in Crimea and the absolute majority of the Russian Federation's people support the reunification of the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol with Russia.

Now this is a matter for Russia's own political decision, and any decision here can be based only on the people's will, because the people is the ultimate source of all authority.

Members of the Federation Council, deputies of the State Duma, citizens of Russia, residents of Crimea and Sevastopol, today, in accordance with the people's will, I submit to the Federal Assembly a request to consider a Constitutional Law on the creation of two new constituent entities within the Russian Federation: the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, and to ratify the treaty on admitting to the Russian Federation Crimea and Sevastopol, which is already ready for signing. I stand assured of your support.

United Nations A/68/804–S/2014/201

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
20 March 2014
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 35
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 19 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Yesterday, Tuesday, 18 March 2014, in yet another blatant violation of the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement, the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of international law, Israeli occupation forces, citing spurious justifications, once again attacked positions inside the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. The justification offered this time was that a mine had exploded some 2 kilometres south of Ayn al-Tinah, near the village of Suhayta. At 1450 hours, enemy forces fired 6 artillery rounds at the location where the mine had exploded. At 1500 hours, they fired 8 artillery rounds at the Suhayta position and another 2 artillery rounds to the south of Hadar. Later, at 1515 hours, enemy forces at a position west of Jubbata al-Khashab fired 4 anti-armour missiles from two helicopters and 25 tank shells towards hill No. 1023, causing significant material damage.

Not satisfied with this aggression, at 0255 hours on 19 March 2014, Israel occupation forces carried out yet another aggression. This time, four Israeli aircraft fired 3 missiles at the Kawm al-Waysiyah position and 1 missile at Nab' al-Fawwar. In another attack, Israel aircraft fired a missile at the Sa'sa' position. One person was killed and seven others were injured in those attacks. In addition, fires broke out and significant material damage occurred at the three sites.

The Syrian Arab Republic draws the attention of the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council to these violations and calls on the Security Council to do what is necessary to deter Israel from continuing in its aggression, the purpose of which is to create a crisis and threaten regional and global security and peace. It also calls on the Council to condemn clearly these acts of aggression, which are a shameless violation of the Agreement on Disengagement and a means by which Israel provides direct support to the armed terrorist groups that are operating in the area of separation and the surrounding areas. We should like to recall that Israel, which complains to the Security Council even when a shepherd mistakenly enters the area of separation, is providing direct and indirect support to

the armed terrorist groups that are in the area of separation by, inter alia, treating wounded terrorists and returning them so that they can resume combat and once again commit crimes against the people living in the area.

Syria reiterates its request that the Security Council should enforce its relevant resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981), which call for Israel to withdraw from all occupied Arab territory, including the occupied Syrian Golan, to the lines of 4 June 1967.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of
the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations

United Nations A/68/805

General Assembly

Distr.: General
20 March 2014

Original: English

Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 134
Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Proposed terms of reference for the representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of the assets of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed terms of reference for the representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of the assets of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (A/68/753), which is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/247, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board, to prepare detailed terms of reference for the proposed full-time post of representative of the Secretary-General, to be reviewed by the Committee and presented to the Assembly at the first part of its resumed sixty-eighth session.

2. During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with the First Vice-Chairman of the Pension Board and with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional clarification, concluding with written responses received on 11 March 2014.

II. Proposed terms of reference for the full-time post of representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of the assets of the Fund

Background

3. The annex to the report of the Secretary-General (A/68/753) contains the proposed terms of reference for his representative for the investment of the assets of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, including the responsibilities,

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competencies, qualifications and delegated authority of the post; in paragraph 4 of the report, the Secretary-General requests the General Assembly to take note of the proposed terms of reference and to approve the establishment of a post at the Assistant Secretary-General level for his full-time representative.

4. According to the Secretary-General, his representative will lead the increasingly complex and demanding investment operations in terms of strategy and policy analysis, asset liability management, asset allocation, portfolio management and investment decision-making; risk management and compliance and monitoring; and back-office accounting, trade settlement, cash management and systems and information technology requirements (A/68/753, annex, para. 4). The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that in the view of the Secretary-General the role of the full-time representative is homologous to a Chief Executive Officer of any asset management fund in the industry, to whom the director of investments, the director of risk and compliance, the director of operations and technologies and the Chief Financial Officer report directly.

Current functions of the representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of the assets of the Fund

5. The Advisory Committee notes that, according to article 19 (a) of the regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, the investment of the assets of the Fund shall be decided upon by the Secretary-General after consultation with an Investments Committee and in the light of observations and suggestions made from time to time by the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board on the investments policy. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the representative of the Secretary-General convenes four regular meetings per year of the Investments Committee, and may convene additional meetings or otherwise consult with members of the Investments Committee, as necessary, during which time the Investments Committee provides advice and recommendations to the representative on the strategic asset allocation and other related conditions, policies and strategies for the investment of the assets of the Fund. The Committee was further informed that, on the basis of the advice received from the Investments Committee and in the light of observations and suggestions made by the Pension Board, the representative establishes the Fund's strategic asset allocation, including the allocation of overall portions of the investment portfolio to stocks, bonds, cash and other short-term instruments, alternative investments, including private equity and real estate investments, and directs the Investment Management Division to manage the investment portfolio of the assets of the Fund accordingly.

6. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon request, that the representative currently delegates and oversees, on an ongoing and regular basis, specific decision-making responsibilities to individuals within the Investment Management Division with respect to:

(a) Transactions involving the assets of the Fund up to prescribed limits by asset class assigned to specific individuals and, within asset classes, the geographical areas for which such individuals have transactional responsibilities, all in accordance with the strategic allocation policy then in effect;

(b) The oversight of and interactions with the Fund's custodian bankers and master record keeper;

(c) The oversight of and interactions with the Fund's investment advisers and brokerage services providers;

(d) The oversight of and interactions with any external discretionary investment managers (for example, of small capitalization funds and certain emerging-market pooled funds);

(e) Transactional settlements, accounting and financial reporting, compliance and compliance monitoring, risk management and monitoring, and all other so-called back-office functions;

(f) In accordance with the applicable regulations and rules of the United Nations, the administration and management of the human and financial resources allocated to the Division for the purposes of managing the investment of the assets of the Fund.

7. **In the absence of classification standards for posts at the level of Assistant Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee compared the functions of the proposed full-time representative with a number of existing posts at the Assistant Secretary-General level, and considers that the duties and responsibilities in the proposed job description are generally in line with those of job descriptions at the same level in the Department of Management.**

Specific qualifications for the proposed post of full-time representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of the assets of the Fund

Work experience

8. The Secretary-General indicates that the proposed post of full-time representative requires at least 20 years of proven progressively responsible experience in the management of economic, social security and/or financial policies and activities for governmental or intergovernmental organizations or for substantial private concerns, including, in the latter case, dealing with the management of the investment of complex portfolios of assets of various classes and in financial markets worldwide (A/68/753, p. 6). The Advisory Committee was informed that the intention of the Secretary-General in formulating the requirements in the proposed terms of reference was not to limit the pool of eligible candidates to technical investment experts, such as experts in pooled investment funds, investment banking or wealth management, whose approach to investment management may be centred on short- to medium-term investment returns, but rather to identify candidates with an understanding of and experience in establishing or operating within macroeconomic policies. The Committee was informed that the investment goals of the Fund relate to matching assets with long-term liabilities; consequently, its investment management depends on suitable strategies to achieve the 3.5 per cent long-term real rate of return assumed by the Pension Board in its actuarial assumptions for the Fund.

9. The Advisory Committee was informed that, according to the Secretary-General, candidates from the public sector having understanding of or having experience in establishing macroeconomic policies, such as central bankers and national finance ministers, would have broad experience and understanding of long-term macroeconomic trends and policies that would affect the performance of a large balanced portfolio of investment assets across a diverse range of asset classes. According to the Secretary-General, candidates from the private sector would be

unlikely to have been in a position to establish or manage such broad macroeconomic policies. The Committee was further informed that the qualifications were formulated to ensure that candidates with experience in the private sector would have had suitable experience in the management of investments for large complex portfolios, with diversified asset classes in worldwide markets. It was therefore considered by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Board that the relevant experience for candidates from the private sector would pertain to the management of large pension, insurance, endowment and similar funds that have long-term investment risk-return outlooks similar to those of the Pension Fund. However, the Advisory Committee was also informed that in the view of the Secretary-General it would be acceptable for a candidate appointed by the Secretary-General to have had no specific experience in managing a portfolio of investments, and that the representative must rather have a solid and broad understanding of economic and financial policies that over the long term can influence investment returns.

10. **The Advisory Committee believes that there is a range of skills from the private and public sectors which can be exercised in the role of the representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of the assets of the Fund, and it recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure that the pool of eligible candidates includes suitably qualified senior figures from the relevant fields. The Committee is also of the view that direct experience in investment portfolio management would be beneficial for the proposed post of representative.**

Consultation with the Investments Committee

11. The Advisory Committee notes that article 19 (a) of the Fund regulations stipulates that the investment of the assets of the fund shall be decided upon by the representative after consultation with the Investments Committee. However, under the responsibilities of the representative contained in the proposed terms of reference, it is stated that the representative, reporting to the Secretary-General and in consultation with the Investments Committee of the Fund and in the light of observations and suggestions made from time to time by the Pension Board on investments policy, will exercise discretionary authority over the investment of the assets of the Fund and will be responsible for the overall investment policy and for the management of the Investment Management Division. **The Committee considers that the approval of the proposed terms of reference by the General Assembly should not be read or interpreted as a change in article 19 (a) of the Fund regulations.**

Term of appointment of the representative

12. According to the proposed terms of reference, the representative of the Secretary-General would serve a five-year term, and would be eligible for reappointment for a further period to be determined by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Pension Board. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the conditions for appointment and reappointment of the representative are intended to be consistent with regulation 4.5 (a) of the Staff Regulations, as promulgated by the General Assembly pursuant to Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, which provides that appointments of Under-Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretaries-General shall normally be for a period of up to five years,

subject to prolongation or renewal of the appointment by the Secretary-General. The Committee was further informed that the appointment of the representative would be made following the Secretary-General's consultation with the Pension Board, but within the sole discretion of the Secretary-General, and that such consultation was considered appropriate insofar as the post would be funded as an administrative expense of the Fund. Therefore, the Committee was informed, any extension or prolongation of the term of the representative would also be subject to such consultation with the Pension Board.

13. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the conditions for appointment and reappointment of the representative of the Secretary-General have not been sufficiently defined. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to revise the proposed terms of reference to allow an initial appointment of up to five years in duration and subsequent reappointment or reappointments, for up to a maximum of 10 years of service as the representative.**

14. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the usual practices for recruitment for senior managers would be followed to ensure that candidates are drawn from a wide geographic basis. Specifically, notes verbales could be sent to Member States and an announcement would be placed in relevant trade journals, in accordance with the procedures described in the note by the Secretary-General on transparency in the selection and appointment of senior managers in the United Nations Secretariat (A/66/380/Add.1). The Committee was informed that the core principle is merit, and the Secretary-General is also committed to the overall need to ensure equitable geographical distribution and gender representation in his senior management team. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to ensure broad dissemination of the vacancy announcement for the post of his representative for the investment of the assets of the Fund, including circulating notes verbales to Member States and targeting industry publications and relevant institutions to allow for a competitive pool of candidates. The Committee expects that the process of recruitment of the representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of the assets of the Fund will be undertaken in a transparent manner.**

III. Other matters

Proposed revision to the Fund regulations

15. The Pension Board, in its report on the administrative expenses of the Fund for the biennium 2014-2015, proposed a revision to the Fund regulations to include a provision requiring the Secretary-General to consult the Board before appointing his representative. In this regard, the Advisory Committee notes that the General Assembly, in section VII of its resolution 68/247, while taking note of paragraphs 33 and 34 of the Committee's report (A/68/7/Add.3), which included the Committee's recommendation for the requested review of the Fund's governance arrangements and management structure, nevertheless endorsed the recommendations contained in the remaining paragraphs of the Committee's report, including paragraph 29, in which the Committee had recommended that the Assembly not approve the proposed revision to the Fund regulations, pending the consideration by the Assembly of the revised terms of reference for the representative. **As the**

appointment and reappointment of the representative falls within the sole discretion of the Secretary-General, who may already consult with the Pension Board on any topic within its purview, the Advisory Committee recommends against the proposed revision to the Fund's regulations stipulating that the Secretary-General consult the Board before appointing his representative.

Structure of the Investment Management Division

16. The Advisory Committee recalls that the Pension Board had proposed the redeployment of the post of Director of the Investment Management Division (D-2) to the Investment Section to serve as the Chief Investment Officer to oversee the private and public markets portfolios (A/68/303, para. 44). In paragraph 36 of its report on the administrative expenses of the Fund for the biennium 2014-2015, the Committee had recommended against the redeployment of the D-2 post, which should continue to retain responsibility for the coordination and management of the Investment Management Division under its current structure, pending the rejustification of the post of Chief Investment Officer as well as the recommended review of the Fund's governance arrangements and management structure (A/68/7/Add.3).

17. In this regard, the Advisory Committee notes that the General Assembly, in section VII of its resolution 68/247, endorsed the report of the Committee, while taking note of paragraph 34 regarding the Committee's recommendation to undertake a review of the governance arrangements and management structure of the Fund; however, the Assembly did not take note of paragraph 36 of the Committee's report. Upon request, the Committee was informed that, with regard to section VII of resolution 68/247, as it pertains to the recommendation of the Committee in paragraph 36 of its report, no action has been taken by the Secretary-General to modify the structure of the Investment Management Division, and that any changes to the structure are dependent on the establishment of the proposed Assistant Secretary-General post.

18. The Advisory Committee was informed that, in the view of the Secretary-General, a direct line of reporting to the representative of the Secretary-General from the Chief Investment Officer, the Chief Risk Officer, the Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Financial Officer reflects the most efficient structure providing a clean decision-making process while ensuring segregation of duties, leadership and overall management, as it is ultimately the representative who must take all decisions related to the investments of the Fund. Moreover, owing to the full-time nature of the proposed post, the representative would be in a position to actively participate in activities of the Investment Management Division and to devote sufficient time to ensure proper dialogue with intergovernmental and oversight bodies, including the Advisory Committee, the General Assembly, the Investments Committee, the Audit Committee, the Asset-Liability Management Steering Committee and the sustainability working group. According to the report on the administrative expenses of the Fund for the biennium 2014-2015, the Chief Financial Officer has a double reporting line to the Chief Executive Officer and to the representative (see A/68/303, para. 114 and annex VII). The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Chief Financial Officer reports to the Chief Executive Officer and to the representative in the context of their respective substantive responsibilities, and that the reporting lines of the Chief Financial Officer have not changed since the establishment of this post in 2009.

19. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed terms of reference for the full-time representative were developed with a view to strengthening the governance of the Fund, especially considering the challenges of the bifurcated management structure. With this in mind, the full-time representative's role focuses on ensuring the unity of the Fund and also on allowing for an efficient and effective coordination with the Board, the Chief Executive Officer, Board committees and other working groups in matters of strategic importance to the Fund. The Committee was further informed that the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund's bifurcated management structure makes it a unique entity among its peers, as the General Assembly has established a single inter-agency entity, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, where the Pension Board is responsible for the management and administration of the Fund and appoints the Chief Executive Officer while the Secretary-General is responsible for the management of the investment of the assets of the Fund, and delegates his authority and responsibility to act on his behalf in all matters involving his fiduciary duties related to the investment of the assets to his representative.

20. Regarding the Board's proposal in its report on the administrative expenses of the Fund for the biennium 2014-2015 to redeploy the post of Director of the Investment Management Division (D-2) to serve as Chief Investment Officer, the Advisory Committee was further informed that, in the light of the key responsibilities, qualifications, appointment criteria, terms and duration of service, level and reporting lines in the proposed terms of reference for the representative, the Secretary-General believes that the existing D-2 post should be devoted to the Investment Section only, overseeing a team of professionals that have responsibilities such as managing and monitoring investment activity, working with external analysts and maintaining good investor relations.

21. **The Advisory Committee notes that the General Assembly, in paragraph 12 of section VII of its resolution 68/247, decided to maintain the current structure of the Fund, and thus the revisions to the structure of the Investment Management Division proposed by the Pension Board in its report on the administrative expenses of the Fund for the biennium 2014-2015 have not been authorized by the Assembly.**

IV. Conclusion and recommendations

22. **Subject to the comments and recommendations contained in the present report, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly take note of the proposed terms of reference for the full-time post of representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of the assets of the Fund.**